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Before The  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary

In the Matter of

ECHO GROUP L.P.

Petition for Rulemaking to Amend  
Section 2.106 of the Commission's  
Rules to Create a New Mobile Data  
Radio Service ("MDRS") in the  
930-931 MHz Band

RM - 7782

REPLY COMMENTS OF ECHO GROUP L.P.

Echo Group L.P. ("Echo"), by its attorneys, hereby submits these Reply Comments, pursuant to Section 1.405(b) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.405(b), in the above-captioned proceeding. In its Petition for Rulemaking, Echo proposed that the Commission take steps to establish a new two-way, terrestrial mobile data radio service ("MDRS"), including the awarding of three local and three nationwide commercial MDRS licensees over 300 KHz (50 KHz each) in the 900 MHz band.

Echo's proposed MDRS would permit the introduction of new inexpensive, but highly advanced, spectrum efficient technologies to meet the exploding demand for transmission of data by mobile users. Three parties

commented on Echo's proposal, two of which supported an allocation for MDRS.

First, Express Communications, Inc. ("Express") fully endorsed Echo's proposal, recognizing the need and demand for two-way mobile data services and stating that such demand in the future will be "overwhelming." Express Comments at 2. Express further advocates interfacing MDRS with Multiple Address Systems ("MAS") and Specialized Mobile Radio ("SMR") systems. Id. at 4-5. Echo supports such a wide application of its MDRS technology to benefit users in other services, and in fact made such a proposal in its Petition. Echo Petition at 9, n.\*. Further, although Echo agrees that strict entry requirements may be necessary to preclude speculative applicants from seeking MDRS licenses, Express's proposed entry standards may be too restrictive. For instance, it is not clear that the four-year restriction on resale proposed by Express would be appropriate. For example, such a ban might impede regionalization and modernization of developing systems, competition between systems, or development of new value added services.

Second, Telocator also supports an allocation for MDRS, although it proposes that the Commission incorporate its consideration of MDRS into a rulemaking for

Telocator's proposed Advanced Messaging Service ("AMS"). Echo certainly welcomes Telocator's support for MDRS as a "new and innovative telecommunications service." See Telocator Comments at 2. Nevertheless, Echo submits that its proposed two-way, spectrum efficient technology is sufficiently different than Telocator's proposed one-way services to require independent consideration. Two-way, interactive service provides an entirely different functionality than one-way services. Moreover, Echo's proposed technology is described and tested whereas (perhaps because of its role as the industry trade association rather than any individual manufacturer) Telocator proposes no specific narrowband or any other new technology at this time. Echo submits that, although Telocator's proposal certainly warrants consideration, it does not amount to an alternative to MDRS in terms of cost, efficiency, and wide-range of duplex applications. As a result, the Telocator petition should not prevent the Commission from acting expeditiously in allocating specific 900 MHz frequencies for MDRS.\* This would still

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\* Echo identified three frequency bands in 900 MHz that would be suitable for MDRS, but specified a preference for 930-931 MHz because the Commission previously reserved this band for advanced mobile data services. See Amendment of Parts 2 and 22 of the Commission's Rules to Allocate Spectrum in the  
(Footnote continued)

leave 700 KHz of spectrum in 930-931 MHz for Telocator's proposed AMS.

Finally, in the only comments questioning Echo's MDRS proposal, Southwestern Bell Corporation ("SBC") argues that the Commission should not allocate spectrum exclusively for MDRS.\* SBC's petition, however, is based on the false premise that the Commission has already committed 930-931 MHz to one-way paging services. This frequency band was not reserved simply for additional one-way paging capacity. Rather, the Commission has reserved this frequency band for advanced technology paging systems and intended to explore additional "potential uses" of this band prior to actual allocation. See First Report and Order, 89 F.C.C. at 1342 (emphasis added). Indeed, the Commission emphasized that the reserved band "was not meant to be a 'spill over' for tone-only or tone-voice systems which use current technology, but was

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(Footnote \* continued from previous page)  
928-941 MHz Band and to Establish Other Rules, Policies, and Procedures for One-Way Paging Stations in the Domestic Public Land Mobile Radio Service, 89 F.C.C.2d 1337, 1342 (1982) ("First Report and Order").

\* Nevertheless, SBC does suggest that MDRS should be considered at least in connection with Telocator's AMS proposal. See SBC Comments at 2 n.5.

rather a band for technologies which are only now being developed." Id. at 1341 (emphasis added).

As Echo demonstrated in its Petition, two-way mobile data is one of the next telecommunications breakthroughs and Echo's narrowband, TDMA proposal is the type of advanced technology for which the Commission reserved 930-931 MHz. Unlike other 930-931 MHz proposals pending before the Commission that merely anticipate additional services that would be provided through conventional technologies, Echo has proposed a highly advanced, spectrum efficient design that would better meet the demand not only for developing two-way mobile data, but also for many of the very services SBC and Telocator propose. Moreover, the inexpensive system can introduce the very types of duplex wireless data services that are currently unavailable due to the lack of affordable transmission equipment and CPE.\*

In short, SBC would have the Commission simply add more spectrum to one-way paging and preclude the introduction of new two-way mobile data services, even though MDRS in some respects could provide the same one-

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\* See, e.g., "Don't Let Wireless Data Take You By Surprise," Telecommunications Products and Technology, April 1991, p. 100.

way paging services more efficiently.\* In fact, the projected cost of MDRS base stations is less than the cost of currently used paging base stations, and the projected cost of MDRS mobile units is less than the cost of currently used pagers. SBC's status quo approach would unnecessarily retard the growth of two-way mobile data services at the very time demand for such services is growing.\*\*

For the reasons set forth above, and for the reasons set forth in Echo's Petition for Rulemaking, Echo requests that the Commission initiate a rulemaking proceeding to authorize a new narrowband, two-way, terres-

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\* For example, MDRS could enable the paged party's transceiver to automatically knowledge receipt of the page even if he is unable to respond by telephone. Currently, if a paged party is unable to access a telephone to answer the page, the paging party is likely to repeat the page several times, resulting in higher costs for the user and inefficient use of available spectrum.

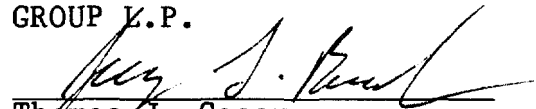
\*\* SBC's backwards approach to the adoption of new technologies is akin to the rejection of HDTV technologies for television transmissions and other applications because there still is a market for conventional video transmission techniques.

trial mobile data radio service for commercial use in the  
930-931 MHz band.

Respectfully submitted,

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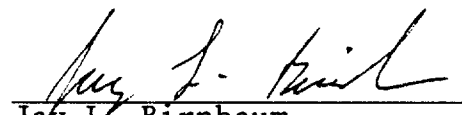
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Jay L. Birnbaum, hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Reply Comments of Echo Group L.P. was sent first class mail, postage prepaid, this 11th day of October, 1991 to the following:

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